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# REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL, 1947

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL,  
Washington, D. C., August 30, 1947.

HON. CLINTON P. ANDERSON,  
*Secretary of Agriculture,*

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I respectfully submit the following report of personnel administration in the Department of Agriculture, covering the period July 1, 1946, through June 30, 1947.

Sincerely yours,

T. ROY REID, *Director.*

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## GENERAL

Throughout the past fiscal year the Office of Personnel has continued to provide leadership, coordination, and guidance in the field of personnel administration. The full impact of the closing out of many of the Department's wartime activities, the redirection to peacetime pursuits of many activities, coupled with reduction in force created by budgetary limitations and personnel ceilings, increased tremendously the work of this Office.

Toward the close of the fiscal year threatened budgetary reductions affecting the entire Department required unusual personnel activity to such an extent that in many instances normal functions had to be curtailed or neglected. The fact that employees who might have to be separated had to have accumulated leave paid out of current appropriations was only one of the many problems which caused thousands of records to be searched, registers prepared, fanfolds issued, and preliminary action taken to be assured that the Department would be prepared for any eventuality.

During the critical phase of the reduction-in-force process a special reassignment committee, composed of members of the Office's top staff, were temporarily taken from regular assignments and were directed to give first and foremost consideration to separation and reassignment problems. Field reviews, a regular part of our decentralized personnel-activity program, were canceled because the services of the reviewers were needed to assist the bureaus in connection with preparations for the anticipated cuts previously mentioned.

### CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION PROGRAM

In the fiscal year 1947, by Executive order, war service regulations were abolished and the Department reverted to operation under the permanent civil service rules and regulations. This reversion involved in many instances additional and new workloads, since the rules and regulations were modified to reflect experience gained during the war. An example is our present work in the field of civil service examinations. Officials of the Department now act as agents of the Civil Service Commission and under its direction, develop examinations, standards, rating schedules, rate papers, and do other related tasks previously performed by the Commission. Your memorandum of March 1946, recognized our responsibility for this decentralized recruitment, examination, and placement function which was delegated by the Civil Service Commission under the President's Executive Order No. 9691.

In accordance with your memorandum, a committee of departmental representatives known as the United States Civil Service Committee of Expert Examiners was appointed to direct the decentralized operations. The first official meeting of the Committee of Expert Examiners was held in March 1946. They were primarily concerned with the development of specifications for the conducting of examinations for filing professional, scientific, and technical positions, predominantly peculiar to the Department. Their functions include:

1. Determination of examination needs.
2. Preparation of qualifications, standards, and announcements for specific examinations.
3. Development of examination materials and techniques for rating examinations.
4. Review of appeals.
5. Establishment of registers.
6. Maintenance of the registers for certification purposes.

In all of these functions the committee members are considered agents of the Civil Service Commission and all standards established and techniques employed are with the approval and under the supervision of the Commission, as well as in keeping with the applicable civil service rules and regulations. Since the committee is essentially a policy-making group, the detailed work in the administration and application of the policies is directed by the Division of Employment. The Director of Personnel defines and makes available the necessary instructions, policies, and practices of the Commission and the Department in order to carry out the work of the committees. He also has the responsibility for maintaining the registers once they have been established and approved by the committee and the Civil Service Commission.

The Board of Examiners established, with the Commission's approval, in August 1946, eight civil service boards of examiners throughout the country for the purpose of handling examinations and setting up registers to fill civil service vacancies. The boards operate under the general supervision of the civil service regional office in the area in which they are headquartered. The personnel and facilities necessary for carrying on the work of the program are provided by agencies of the Department since no additional funds have as yet been

appropriated for that purpose. Each board consists of five members including the chairman. Members are selected from among the high level of operating and administrative officials in the field service. Under the present program, civil service examinations have been given for many of our professional and scientific positions.

### REDUCTION IN FORCE

Total employment in June 1947 was less than it had been before the war yet the scope of the Department's activities had considerably increased. Although not overstaffed, the Department was affected in the Government-wide postwar retrenchment, along with agencies born of war necessity. Total direct appropriations, already below prewar levels, were further curtailed, which necessitated a reduction in force that was felt throughout the Department. During the 1947 fiscal year, 8,458 full-time employees were separated as a direct result of reduction in force; more than half of these separations took place in the last month of the fiscal year. So broad were the effects, that some career-service employees who had been with the Department as many as 15 and 20 years received dismissal notices. Special attention, however, is being given to reassigning these career-service employees and those with veteran's preference.

Within the civil service regulations, the Department is doing its utmost to administer the reduction program equitably. The separation of employees is not the total problem nor the most important part of it, but is rather an end result. Any equitable program to reduce personnel must include an effective reassignment procedure, whereby permanent employees affected by a reduction in one bureau may be considered for jobs held by war-service employees in any other bureau. Retaining competent public servants within a framework designed to protect each individual's right to retention is contingent upon a reassignment process. Consequently, the Department's administrative machinery for this purpose has been faced with two issues; namely, effectiveness on the one hand, and equity on the other. The test of effectiveness is to make certain that in the retrenchment process those re-assigned possess qualifications equal or superior to job requirement; the test of equity is to make certain that those finally reached in the reassignment and separation process are persons with the fewest retention credits in their respective job spheres.

In order to assist employees faced with the loss of their positions, the pamphlet *When Your Job Ends* was issued. It contains such information as general rules governing procedure for reduction in force, reassignment and reemployment rights, appeals, retirement information, and information on possible reemployment opportunities both Federal and private. In addition, the Office of Personnel, in cooperation with the Civil Service Interdepartmental Placement Committee, issues a biweekly pamphlet to all Bureau personnel officers listing employment vacancies in the Department and other Federal agencies.

In the latter part of May, the Office of Personnel established an intensified program of personal assistance to the agencies of the Department in connection with their reduction-in-force program. Every effort was made to find positions for the veterans and career-service employees of the Department who would otherwise have been separated. Key personnel from our personnel divisions were set up as a



temporary unit to work with and assist the various bureaus in the placement of veterans and career-service employees. These designated representatives called upon personnel officers and officials of the particular bureaus to which they had been assigned for the purpose of familiarizing themselves with the reduction-in-force problem, to be of service to the bureau in solving their problems, and to aid employees entitled to reassignment within and between agencies.

For example, one of the primary objectives of the representative assigned to the Farm Credit Administration was to try to effect the placement of veterans and career-service employees involved in that bureau's reduction in force. In addition, he received from a temporary central-control desk established in the personnel office, referrals of displaced employees from other bureaus for placement, if possible, in the Farm Credit Administration.

This temporary set-up met the Washington problem. It was necessary to make other arrangements insofar as field employees were concerned. Outside Washington, eight field placement committees were established. They were located in the same cities and operated in the same manner as the field boards of civil service examiners to which we have previously referred. These field placement committees, unlike the Washington set-up, were not considered as temporary and although their immediate responsibility was largely in the reassignment of personnel affected by reduction in force, their long-range function will be to develop and administer a cooperative program of recruitment and placement on a department-wide basis.

Approximately 90 percent of the Department's employees are located in the field. In some of the country's important cities there are large concentrations of Department of Agriculture workers. Consequently, any career-service program on a Department-wide basis or promotion, transfer, or reassignment would necessitate some form of coordination of field-operating organizations. The field placement committees should fill a long-felt need in this respect, and it is anticipated that by their efforts many employees familiar with the Department's operations will be retained who otherwise might have been lost.

It is felt that the Office of Personnel's program accomplished several objectives:

1. It helped to set up and direct the necessary administrative machinery in the several bureaus.
2. It made every effort to guarantee that this machinery was operating with justice to both the public and the individual.
3. It helped the various bureaus with their interbureau-transfer problems so that reassignments were made on a department-wide basis.
4. It made certain that those who were finally displaced had received every assistance the Department could render in placing them in positions elsewhere.

It should be noted that this complex problem will continue to exist well into the fiscal year 1948.

#### VETERANS

Of the more than 18,000 employees of the Department who entered the military service only about 4,000 have not yet returned. It is believed that some of these 4,000 have been released from the service but have elected not to return to the Department.

Although the number of veterans returning to positions previously held in Agriculture has diminished, budget limitations, new regulations, and new legislation have all combined to bring to the Office of Personnel new problems in connection with the veteran. As a result of these problems, the total work load in this activity increased rather than decreased. An example of this shift in emphasis on the veteran problem can be illustrated by referring to the President's letter of August 23, 1945, addressed to heads of executive departments and agencies. This communication stated in part:

"It is my desire that the heads of all departments and agencies arrange to put into effect as promptly as possible the recommendations which the Civil Service Commission makes under Section 14 of the Veterans Preference Act of 1944. This constitutes another way in which the Federal Government can demonstrate that it intends to live up to both the letter and the spirit of the Veterans Preference Act."

Under authority of section 14 of the Veterans Preference Act, the Commission has issued regulations providing for veterans' appeals in cases of adverse decisions of administrative officers relating to discharges, suspensions for more than 30 days, furlough without pay, and reductions in rank or compensation for reasons other than reduction in force. We have not only complied with the Commission's new regulations but have made every effort to live up to the spirit of the Veterans Preference Act. As an aid in giving full force and effect to the act, there has existed in the Department since February 1946, a Veterans Advisory Committee. This committee has worked closely with the Office of Personnel assisting with such veterans' problems as restoration to the rolls, appeals, placement, reassignment, and promotional policies.

The Department made 7,365 new veteran appointments in the first 6 months of the 1947 fiscal year, as compared to 10,430 new appointments of World War II veterans in the fiscal year 1946. New veteran appointments represented approximately one-third of all new appointments and reappointments made during the period June 1945 to January 1947. On June 30, 1947, 36 percent of the Department's employees in the United States were veterans.

#### FIELD REVIEW

Washington and field personnel offices of the Department's agencies were reviewed to determine the method of application and value of the employment, classification, and other delegated authorities under which they were operating. In general, the reviews disclosed a wholesome situation. Operating officials were benefiting by the personal attention and responsibility they gave to their personnel function. Suggestions and recommendations made by them were adopted to simplify the procedures.

The reviews of the smaller offices exercising delegated authorities, in addition to assuring the proper exercise of delegated authority, raised a serious question regarding the advisability of delegating authority to such offices. It was found in some instances that the advantages of delegation of authority to an office tended to disappear mainly as a result of the small number of people employed and actions processed. The time consumed in learning the necessary rules and regulations was not justified in many cases.

Large field offices not exercising delegated authority were reviewed in order to determine whether the delegation of authority to such offices would facilitate program operations. It was found in some instances that the size of the office, its remoteness from the central office of the bureau, and the volume of personnel actions made it desirable that the bureau request delegated authority for its field office.

The field reviews, in addition to obtaining an evaluation of the personnel program of the offices visited, provided an opportunity for discussion with field officials regarding problems engendered by reductions in appropriations and changes in Civil Service Commission regulations. Where possible, assistance in solving such problems was supplied by the field reviewer. In other instances, the solution of such problems resulted in changes in our policies and practices.

In 1947, the Inspection Division of the Civil Service Commission began its operations. Its inspection program was similar to the field-review activities of this Office in some respects, but laid more stress on the procedural aspects of personnel administration. In addition, the subject-matter coverage was restricted in that organization, wage and salary administration, training, safety, health, welfare, grievances and appeals, disciplinary actions, and employee counseling were outside the scope of such inspections.

Reports were received from the Civil Service Commission pointing out wherein certain field offices were not exercising correctly some of the authorities delegated by the Commission to the Department. This Office developed a system for handling the reports of the Inspection Division, their analysis, correspondence with the bureaus, and policy determinations with respect to the practices of the bureaus and the requirements of the Commission. In addition to the insight into the manner in which our personnel program has been operating, the analysis of reports afforded an opportunity to review the paper work of personnel offices for the purpose of eliminating unnecessary records. We have received the cooperation of the Commission toward this end.

### LEGISLATION

Approximately 35 laws which directly affected personnel administration in the Department were passed during the year. A few, such as the Federal Employees Pay Act of 1946, were approved during the preceding fiscal year but their impact was not felt until after July 1, 1946.

Among some of the more important laws which necessitated the expenditure of considerable time in the determination and promulgation of new policies and procedures were:

The Federal Employees Pay Act of 1946, which provided for an increase in pay rates, adjustment of pay scales for CPC-9 and 10 grades, raised holiday pay to double time, permitted receipt of night differential in addition to overtime and provided for the periodic decrease of the number of employees under the ceiling limitations.

Public Law 600 approved August 2, 1946, which permitted the establishment of an honor awards program in this Department. Since this type of activity was new to the Department, much had to be done from the policy standpoint before the program could be



placed in operation.<sup>1</sup> This same law permitted the delegation by the Secretary to agencies of the Department of his authority to appoint personnel. In addition, it changed the mandatory-dismissal penalty for private use of Government vehicles by permitting discretionary lesser penalties.

Public Law 658, approved August 8, 1946, which authorized the institution of a health program in the Department. This Office participated actively in the presentation of facts before the Bureau of the Budget and the Congress in order to facilitate passage of Public Law 658. Operation of the program after passage of the enabling legislation was dependent upon appropriations made for this purpose. The Eightieth Congress has appropriated money, and plans are in process of completion for the organization of a health program in the Department.

Passage of the Farmers Home Administration Act of 1946, which resulted in blanketing under civil service thousands of employees formerly without status. Policies and procedures governing the acquisition of status by Farmers Home Administration employees were determined and negotiations conducted by this Office with the Commission.

Public Law 239, which provided for the abolishment of the law in effect during wartime which permitted the accumulation of 90 days annual leave.

Public Law 263, which permitted employees with less than 10 years of service to withdraw the money in the retirement fund to their credit.

Public Law 153, which amended existing laws so as to give members of the Enlisted Reserve Corps the same military leave rights as were accorded to members of the Officers Reserve Corps.

Public Law 325, which amended Section 14 of the Veterans Preference Act so that veterans could appear personally before the Civil Service Commission in case of appeals in which they were involved. It also made the decisions of the Commission mandatory upon the departments.

### ORGANIZATION

Congressional and secretarial action during the fiscal year resulted in several changes to the Department's organization structure. These increased the over-all work load of the Office, since each shift in organization affects practically all of the office's operations. Notable among the changes were the following:

1. Establishment of Farmers Home Administration—Consolidated certain functions of Farm Security Administration (which was abolished) with crop- and feed-loan activities transferred from Farm Credit Administration.

2. Transfer of sugar controls from OPA and establishment of the Sugar Rationing Administration pursuant to Sugar Control Extension Act of 1947.

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<sup>1</sup> See Honor Awards, p. 12.

3. Establishment of Office of Hearing Examiners to perform duties required by the Administrative Procedure Act and other laws relating to administrative hearings in the Department.

4. Establishment of Commodity Exchange Authority as an independent agency in Department (formerly in the Production and Marketing Administration).

5. Transfer from the Department of Interior to the Bureau of Animal Industry of research work on fur-bearing animals. Transferred to the Bureau, from the Production and Marketing Administration, meat inspection, animal-foods inspection, and enforcement of the 28-Hour Law. In addition, the Bureau increased its scope of activity by taking over, in cooperation with the Mexican Government, a program of combating foot-and-mouth disease and rinderpest found in Mexican animals.

As a direct result of the above and due to change in operational emphasis, the agencies of the Department submitted 217 organization proposals to the Office of Personnel for prior approval during the period July 1, 1946, through June 30, 1947. The Office approved 193 of the recommendations; 24 were rejected or returned for further study; and, 33 were approved only after changes recommended by this Office had been incorporated.

#### CLASSIFICATION

The classification activities continued to be relatively heavy. Additional authorities were delegated in both the departmental and field services as adequate staffs became available in the agencies of the Department. The several major reorganizations, changes in functions, realignment of activities, and the institution of new or revised position specifications and standards, caused increase in both the allocation of new positions and reallocation of existing positions.

A plan was developed during the year to obtain maximum coverage in the audit of field positions. Under this plan the Office selected several States having a large number of Department employees of several bureaus. Employees in selected cities in the State were then asked to fill out questionnaires stating their duties, and later a reviewer from the Office made an on-the-spot review and desk audit of the positions involved. By this method, we were able to properly allocate positions in the State under review and to develop guide lines for the allocation of similar positions throughout the Nation.

Experience with the delegated authority system has shown necessity for some revision in the standards under which delegations are made. Criteria used in determining which positions require prior approval of the Office of Personnel are being revised in order to be made more selective and thus reduce the volume of actions requiring approval in the Office of Personnel. Standards for types of organization and staff to whom authority can be delegated were changed to permit more extensive areas of coverage in the field. This was made possible primarily by the increased availability of Department and Civil Service Commission specifications and standards which, as classification guides, serve to enlarge the staff area where delegations of authority may be made. In some instances, the application of the standard job description system extended the use of delegated authority for the first time to State offices.

Class Specifications have increased in importance during the year and there has been an expansion in their development. The Office worked with various bureaus and developed series of particular importance to the Department, and increased its cooperation with the Civil Service Commission in the development of series crossing agency lines. It fostered further participation of the bureaus in the specification program, so that personnel officers, professional leaders, and administrators have shown increased interest in this activity and have given valuable suggestions and criticisms on tentative drafts.

The groups of specialists in the several bureaus, organized last year to assure a review and consideration of specifications from an operation point of view prior to official publication, have produced excellent results and have encouraged the organization of further groups for this purpose. Because operating people are becoming more aware that these specifications are effective as a tool of management, there is increasing interest in their development and a demand for them in the various bureaus.

### SALARY ADMINISTRATION

An improved plan was developed during the fiscal year for wage-rate setting throughout the Department; written instructions in the field of compensation and hours of duty were codified and brought up to date; preliminary work was done on setting work standards in cooperation with certain operating officials; and the bureaus were advised on current problems of wage and salary administration.

Upon recommendation of the Forest Service, wage boards were established in nine Forest Service regions to fix wage rates for laborers and craftsmen. Other wage boards were established during the year in the Labor Branch of the Production and Marketing Administration and at the Natural Cooler Storage Project at Atchison, Kans. The staff cooperated with representatives of other departments in the activities of the Interdepartmental Lithographic Wage Board and helped develop a working agreement among the department heads concerned for the future operations of this Board. Because of Interior's control over the National Parks and other forested areas, cooperation continued with this agency in setting wage rates for forest fire fighters and auxiliary personnel.

In consultation with representatives of all bureaus of the department concerned with the problem, a circular of instructions embodying a comprehensive administrative plan, policies, and procedures was developed for setting wage rates for laborers and craftsmen throughout the Department.

Numerous technical questions regarding the salary rates to be paid veterans upon return to duty arose during the year. Many of these questions required decisions by the Comptroller General and the Civil Service Commission. As rapidly as solutions were found to these problems, instructions were issued for the guidance of the bureaus.

### EFFICIENCY RATINGS

By special arrangement with the Civil Service Commission, a new rating system is being tried in the Farmers Home Administration. The FHA approach for improving the plan of efficiency rating begins



with the supervisor first studying jobs rather than the people in such jobs. Through well-planned job analysis, the factors or elements that make up each job are determined. Successful supervision depends to a great extent on the supervisor and employee understanding each other and the determination of job elements provides a common ground for this understanding regarding the employee's work operations. Mutually, employee and supervisor determine the important work factors to be rated. The employee knows what is expected of him; the supervisor judges work performance directly on the work operations required in a specific job.

It is hoped that the FHA experiment in "performance reporting" will overcome some of the objections to the present Federal efficiency rating system and provide the basis for a successful one that will fully meet the needs of good administration.

There was a marked increase in the number of efficiency-rating appeals during the latter part of this fiscal year. It is expected that this increase will continue. For example, more appeals have already been filed so far this year than were filed during the entire 1947 fiscal year. Legislation affecting veterans and the reduction-in-force program, both of which we have already discussed, were the primary cause in the increased number of appeals.

### EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Postwar readjustments, the uncertainty of appropriations, and separation notices resulted in low morale of employees in some of the agencies of the Department during the latter part of the fiscal year. Every effort was made to counteract this situation through counseling, giving information to employees concerning retention and reassignment rights, and by accelerating the employees' activities program.

Relatively few grievances arose out of poor working conditions or other normal working complaints. Employee appeals were concentrated on factors which would affect the retention by the employee of his position. This accounted for the increased number of efficiency-rating appeals as higher efficiency ratings entitled employees to more retention points and in many instances were the deciding factor as to whether an employee was retained or separated.

An accelerated recreation and employee-activities program was inaugurated by the Welfare Association's appointment of a full-time recreation and activities director.

Need for housing remained acute and was probably one of the most important employee-morale services rendered. The housing need was accentuated by the return to Washington of certain functions and employees of the Farm Credit Administration. Services in connection with transportation, child day care, personnel counseling, welfare campaigns, and programs remained approximately the same as for the preceding year.

### HEALTH

Lack of funds necessitated closing of the Department's emergency rooms in Chicago and New York. However, emergency rooms and first-aid units treated approximately 33,000 cases during the year. Of these about 26,000 were handled by the Washington and Beltsville set-ups.



At our request, the United States Public Health Service made a comprehensive survey of the Department's Washington set-up in order to determine the cost and extent of a practical employee health program as authorized and permitted by Public Law 658, Seventy-ninth Congress. The Health Service's recommendations, in the 65-page report, cannot be complied with in detail because the sums necessary to put them in effect exceeded the amount appropriated.

### SAFETY

During the fiscal year, the Safety Council was reorganized and expanded to include participation in the Department's over-all safety program. Although there was an expansion of safety in certain bureaus, this was offset by some loss of safety personnel as a result of the Department's general reduction in force. The accident frequency for the calendar year 1946 remained approximately the same as it had been in 1945. Twenty-five regular and two cooperative employees of the Department received fatal injuries.

### TRAINING

The insistent demand for necessary agricultural research and services coupled with reduced budget and enforced reduction in personnel makes the highest production of each employee more important than ever before. High production depends on well-trained employees. The Office of Personnel assists the bureaus in analyzing their work to determine where training is needed. It also assists the persons responsible for training in the agencies in planning the most urgent training needed and in helping them to get their plans into use. Methods, devices, and other new developments from other Government agencies and industry are studied, adapted and demonstrated.

The supervisor's job is to maintain high morale that can result in high employee efficiency. Training supervisors in good management is the key to productiveness in an agency. Recognizing this importance of supervisory training, 1,428 administrators and supervisors in the agencies have received instruction in the technique of training supervisors. Instrumental in obtaining awareness on the part of administrators for the need of supervisory training has been a special set of charts emphasizing the supervisor's responsibility in the maintenance of high work performance. These have been used as an introduction to making an analysis of each agency's need for improvement of supervision.

Orientation training has been conducted to give new employees information on history, organization, functions, and a better understanding of the work of all agencies. A set of charts entitled "Guide to Broader Understanding and Better Public Service" was developed, and it forms the basis for an illustrated discussion in this connection. Also, a motion picture entitled "A Decision for Bill" has been produced by the Department in cooperation with the Association of Land-Grant Colleges for use in portraying the types of service our agencies give the public. Field employees have been further informed on departmental activities through local USDA clubs and the distribution of the Department's publication USDA. During the year, 82 USDA clubs representing 39 States and Puerto Rico were given assistance

and guidance. These local clubs help unify, throughout the country, the efforts of various agencies of the Department with headquarters in the same city.

Training in conference leadership, use of suggestion systems, and job-methods training are used by the Office for improving communication to effectively pass along to each employee information which he needs for efficient operation and the return of suggestions to the Administrator. The Work Simplification Program of the Bureau of the Budget has been widely used in the Department and many officials have been trained to reduce unit costs for more economical operation. Training programs in simplified letter and report writing and telephone technique and manners were carried out.

The Department was established primarily as a scientific research agency. Today, there are approximately 18,000 professional and technical employees engaged in work of the Department. With the passage of the Research and Marketing Act of 1946 and the inauguration of programs under this act, the need for well-trained research personnel becomes more pressing. One of the main objectives of the Office of Personnel is to assist bureaus of the Department in meeting the need for well-trained professional and technical personnel.

#### HONOR AWARDS

During the fiscal year an Honor Awards Program was placed in operation by the Department. Authority for the awards program was contained in the Manasco Act and Executive Order 9817, dated December 31, 1946, entitled "Regulations Governing Awards to Federal Employees for Meritorious Suggestions and for Exceptional or Meritorious Service." The Personnel Office, for at least a year prior to the bill's passage, collaborated in formulating the policy and structure of an awards plan particularly adapted to the Department.

Briefly, the present plan provides for three types of awards. First, the Length of Service Award which is recognized by awarding a different certificate and lapel emblem or button for each 10 years of service. Second, the Superior Service Award which is granted to employees for achievements which could be considered over and above the requirements of their positions. Recipients of this award are presented with a silver medal, a certificate, and a silver lapel emblem. Third, the Distinguished Service Award granted to employees for outstanding service beyond the requirements of their position of a very broad or national significance. Recipients of this award receive a gold medal, a certificate, and a gold lapel emblem. The certificates in all cases contain a citation stating the achievement meriting the award.

The Office of Personnel has been granted sole responsibility for the administration of the Length of Service Award. This year some delay was encountered in initiating the awards program; however, it is anticipated that the bureaus are now familiar enough with its working that the original plan of having the presentation of the awards made on May 15 (the date when Agriculture was established as an independent bureau in 1862) of each year can be placed in operation.

## INVESTIGATIONS

Prompt and effective disciplinary action in the cases of employees who wilfully violate laws or Department regulations, or who otherwise become involved in delinquency or misconduct, is not only necessary, but an important phase of sound personnel management. During the past year these cases were about equally divided between actions taken by employment officers under their delegated authority which are post-audited in the Division of Investigations, and those submitted for prior approval of the Director of Personnel. Continued improvement was noted in the quality of the disciplinary work performed under delegated authority. For the instruction and guidance of employment officers and supervisory officials, a Guide for Use in Handling Disciplinary Cases was prepared and issued. Many favorable comments have been received about this pamphlet, and it is expected to prove most valuable in securing more uniform treatment of the less serious disciplinary cases at the agency level, and more uniform recommendations in the more serious cases requiring prior approval of the Director of Personnel.

There has been an increase in the number of appeals to the Civil Service Commission by employees having veteran preference, particularly from decisions directing their removal for cause. These appeals involve the preparation of records and correspondence, a review and analysis of files, the attendance at hearings, and represent a substantial amount of time and effort. It is anticipated that these appeals will increase in volume in the next few years.

Executive Order No. 9835 of March 21, 1947, provided for a Federal Employees Loyalty Program. The order and accompanying instructions made it clear that:

The Civil Service Commission would:

- (1) Make "Record Checks and Inquiries" on new appointees.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation would:

- (1) Make "full field" loyalty investigations on new appointees as a result of leads developed through the Commission's preliminary "Record Checks and Inquiries" or as a result of leads developed from Federal Bureau of Investigation files.
- (2) Conduct "full field" loyalty investigations required when a check of their files developed a question of loyalty on an incumbent employee.

The Department would:

- (1) Prepare and issue directives for the implementation of the Executive order and instructions.
- (2) Establish and maintain within the Department a control system for insuring the submission of information on all incumbent employees on the rolls as of September 30, 1947.
- (3) Obtain and distribute at all operating levels the necessary forms for following prescribed procedure.

(4) Obtain and submit the required forms properly prepared for each incumbent employee to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and certify the completeness of the coverage to the Civil Service Commission in accordance with prescribed procedure.

(5) Receive and adjudicate, subject to postaudit by the Civil Service Commission, all information received by the Civil Service Commission from the Federal Bureau of Investigation of a derogatory nature relating to the loyalty of any incumbent employee of the department.

(6) Assure the existence of adequately trained and informed staff to perform the previously-described functions.

The administration of this program is a new responsibility for the Department and has been handled by the Division of Investigations. It is anticipated that the work load will reach its peak during the next fiscal year.





